

Veterinary Services 1918-1962

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From the end of the 1914-18 war to the present the Departments of Veterinary Services in both Kenya and Tanganyika have been very active in Masailand. The visible results of their work involve provision of water supplies, treatment and prevention of disease, and provision of some experimental or demonstration ranches whose aim is to encourage better livestock management on the part of the Masai. European veterinary personnel with African assistants have been active in Western Masailand in both Kenya and Tanganyika, and they have exerted a very significant influence on the ecology of the area. As noted above their work has greatly aided the increase in the numbers of the Masai livestock, without showing any demonstrable improvement in the quality of the livestock, and with very demonstrable deterioration of the grazing land, especially in the vicinity of the water points.

The significant exceptions are the activities of the Isetse Survey and Control Branch of the Kenya Department of Veterinary Services. In Narok District they have maintained two small fieldhouses (one has since been removed), a field laboratory, and an experimental ranch. Their research has been aimed at learning the

- 648 ecology of the tsetse flies in order to effect their  
• 654 control without employing destructive game killing or  
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232 land clearing schemes (Langridge, 1960, 1961). Within  
Western Masailand their work has largely consisted  
of careful research and controlled experimentation,

The damage to rangeland resulting from the activities of the other branches of the Veterinary Services are the natural result of a well intentioned, efficient, but narrow approach to the livestock problems of the Masai. Such effects are not limited to East Africa. There are many such examples in the western United States.